Study of Reading in Indiana Middle, Junior, and Senior High Schools

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Executive Summary

A questionnaire concerning reading was sent to Indiana middle, junior, and senior high schools in 1992 and a report was written at that time. The same questionnaire was sent to the same schools in 2003. During this period of time increased interest was shown throughout the nation in reading achievement and high school graduation rates. The purpose of this report is to share the results about what has happened during that period of time in Indiana middle, junior, and senior high schools concerning staff development, special assistance in reading, time for reading instruction, school library media centers, major influences on reading programs, voluntary reading, family support, school and public library relationship, and priority for reading in schools. While progress is being made, many of the areas of concern in 1992 continue to exist.

Staff Development. There is an increase in local staff development for reading teachers, but fewer participate in state and national reading activities.

Special Assistance in Reading. There is a decline in students receiving special help in reading. Few school corporations provide Title I support or special reading assistance other than in the primary grades.

Time for Reading Instruction. More middle grades schools are providing reading courses for their students.

School Library Media Centers.   Spending for school library books is about the same even though the price of books has more than doubled. Circulation of school library books is lower.

Major Influences on Reading Programs. The major influences on reading programs are within local schools and school corporations. Schools report little influence on their reading programs from professional organizations and Indiana colleges and universities.

Voluntary Reading. There is a definite overall improvement in voluntary reading.

Family Support. There is no improvement in school programs to encourage parents to read and discuss books with their children. Only one-fifth of the schools provide such programs.

School and Public Library Relationship. Schools continue to report that most of their students do not use their public libraries on a regular basis.

Priority for Reading. Schools that have a high reading priority offer more special help in reading, have a higher ratio of reading teachers to students, add many more new books to school library book collections, have a larger school library book circulation rate, and have more members of the school staff who frequently read and discuss books.

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Introduction

The scene is a large rural K-12 school on the first day of the school year. A kindergarten child appears in the immense (to him) school foyer. The building principal turns toward him as she finished greeting the last of the students on the first day of school. His tear-stricken, sad, countenance disturbed her. She knelt and hugged him, but his statue-like posture was not responsive. He did not speak, but the look in his eyes revealed that he felt all alone and afraid. She took him by the hand to his room and left him there. Each morning for two weeks she made sure she gave him a hug as he entered the school building, but the tears still flowed. She stopped by his classroom each day to visit and twice weekly read to the children. She noticed his improvement in the classroom but had never experienced a child who did not respond to a hug. One day she was not at the entrance to hug this child. When she returned the next day and met him at the door, he ran to her, hugged her, and said, " I'm glad you came back." (These were the first words he had spoken to her.) Then he pranced down the hall to his class. Now, it was the principal who had tears in her eyes. Later that day in a discussion with the teacher the principal learned that the child did not know how to hug and further had never been read to at home. As reading was a priority in this school, the school library was filled with new books and other print materials, parents were encouraged to share books with their children, reading was taught as a separate subject in grades six through eight, and the entire school community was engaged in contributing to the success of all its students. This child was one of the fortunate students who were nurtured throughout his schooling.

Many years later as the principal visited the school in another capacity, a student caught up with her as she was walking down the hall and said, "Remember me? You gave me hugs and read to me. I have never forgotten." After checking, the former principal learned that this young adolescent was now very successful in school and participated in several extra-curricular activities, including band. Caring administrators, teachers, members of the community, and his family contributed to the eventual academic success of this young man.

Similar experiences and successes have been witnessed by the authors in many schools across Indiana; however, the authors' investigations of educational programs in Indiana prisons show that many young adolescents turned to the streets for their education when essential needs were not met through the collaboration of home, school, and community. Thus many drop out of school because they cannot read and therefore cannot do the work in the various subject areas. According to the Indiana Department of Corrections and the Indiana Department of Education (Kathy Lisby {DOC} & Patti Bond {IDOE} Personal Communication, December, 2003), in Indiana alone, as contained in the 2002 data, there were 8,594 of 12,059 individuals admitted to Indiana prisons who did not complete the 12th grade of school. Indiana now spends $20,966 per prison inmate per year. In contrast, the average General Fund expenditure for public school students was $3711 per student in 1992 and $5746 in 2003 (excluding special education students). Indiana prisons now provide educational programs for inmates that range from teaching basic reading and math

skills, preparing for the test of General Educational Development (GED), vocational/technical training, and offering courses leading to college degrees. The return to prison rate in 2003 was 26.9 percent. It is now assumed that with more emphasis on reading and math skills in Indiana middle, junior, and senior high schools as well as in the prison educational programs that the return rate to prison will lessen and inmates will lead more productive lives in the work force when they are released. Data is being collected that will either confirm or deny this assumption.

In the new millennium a minimum of a high school education is paramount to participate in a productive workforce, and extensive vocational technical training or a college degree further ensures the chances for career and job opportunities.

The United States Census Bureau (Education Commission of the States, April/October, 2003) survey report states that 31 percent of the nation's population have college degrees while in Indiana only 25 percent hold college degrees, thus Indiana ranks 44th in the nation of the population holding college degrees (IndyStar.Com, 2003). Indiana's status has improved somewhat since 1989 when only 13.8 percent of Indiana adults had completed college. The national average was then 20.3 percent (Kominsky, 1991). Ironically, one study of students in the 1999-2000 school year revealed that only 31 percent of Indiana high school students were academically ready for college (Greene & Forester, 2003).

One way to evaluate a state's relative progress in teaching reading is to analyze standardized test scores. The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) in 1986 and 1990 summary reports indicate that only 11 percent of thirteen-year-olds in 1980, 1984, 1988, and 1990 could comprehend complicated reading material. Yet a summary of results across grade levels four, eight, and twelve over the last two decades reveals that students have mastered decoding skills and can understand specific and sequential information. However, when material becomes more complicated (proficient level and advanced levels), only a few students are competent. Clearly, reading proficiency increases nationally from grades four through eight but declines between grades eight and twelve. For some reason, research is showing that as students move into the adolescent years, they tend to read less (Valencia, Hiebert, & Kapinus, 1992; Mullis, Owen, & Phillips, 1990; Langer, Applebee, Mullis, & Foertsch, 1990; Kirsch & Jungeblut, 1986; Applebee, Langer, & Mullis 1988; Langer et al., 1990) which then can lead to lower achievement and lower test scores. Additionally, these results, along with other disturbing information, indicate that there is indeed a correlation between successful reading and crime, teen pregnancy, substance abuse, and dropping out of school (Davidson & Koppenhaver, 1988).

More recent 1992 and 2003 NAEP results indicate that there was no significant change in reading scores since 1992, but in 2003 there was an overall gain in eighth-grade scores. The percent of eighth-graders at or above the Basic level decreased by one point between 2002 and 2003 but was higher in 2003 than in 1992. Students did score higher at the proficient level in both fourth and eighth

grades than they did in 1992. There was no significant change in fourth-graders from 2002 to 2003. (Indiana's fourth graders ranked 16th in reading on the 2003 National Assessment of Educational Progress but dropped to 30th at the eighth grade level). The percentages of twelfth-graders at or above the Basic and Proficient levels decreased between 1998 and 2002. Scores were lower than in 1992 (National Center for Education Statistics, 1992-2003).

A study of high school graduation rates in 2000 showed that 84 percent of Asian, 59 percent of Hispanic, 53 percent of black, and 78 percent of white students graduated from high school. It was concluded that more black and Hispanic students drop out of school than white and Asian students. Further, students who do not take college-preparatory courses are not as likely to score at the Basic level in reading on the NAEP (Greene & Forester, 2003). Indiana had a graduation rate of 74 percent in 2000.

A recent 32 nation study of educational achievement shows that United States students scored in the middle, but results indicate that the gap between the best and worst student scores is wider than in any other country. According to David Hoff (Education Week, 2001) the results reveal what reading experts already know, "More students leave the primary grades as competent readers steeped in the basics, but many fail to refine and build on their skills as they move through middle and high school."

In 1992 the Middle Grades Reading Network funded a study of *Reading in Indiana Middle, Junior, and Senior High Schools.* This study revealed that:

- Middle grades students had less time allotted to reading in the school curriculum than their counterparts of fifty years ago;
- One-quarter of Indiana schools provided no special assistance for middle-grades students who had fallen behind due to reading failure;
- Over one-third of students who had fallen behind one or more grade levels received no special help;
- Indiana ranked thirty-second nationwide in textbook expenditures;
- Indiana schools spent, on the average, $1.92 per student per year on supplementary classroom reading materials—less than the cost of one paperback book;
- Many teachers received no planned staff development in reading;
- Few schools made efforts to connect with parents and community agencies, such as public libraries, to extend young people's reading opportunities beyond the school day; and,
- Indiana students ranked forty-second (after adjustments) out of fifty states and Washington, D.C. on SAT scores (Humphrey, 1992, March, No. 4).

Realizing that much was missing in young people's lives as readers prompted the Middle Grades Reading Network to establish a stakeholder group to develop a plan

(Middle Grades Reading Network, 1995) towards becoming a Community of Readers. The culmination of extensive research and study by reading stakeholders resulted in the document that states:

All young adolescents in Indiana need access to the kinds of reading opportunities that will allow them to grow up to be successful members of a literate community. It is the responsibility of the entire community to offer support for providing these opportunities. Our ultimate goal is the creation of Communities of Readers where each young adolescent will be able to fulfill his or her potential as a reader.

To that end, we believe that Indiana's young adolescents deserve:

1. ***Access to Books***   *Access to current appealing, high-interest, and useful books and other reading materials in their classrooms, homes, public and school libraries, and other locations within the community.*

2. ***Encouragement to Value Reading***   *Schools that feature an environment where reading is valued, promoted, and encouraged.*

3. ***Time to Read***   *Dedicated time during the school day to read for a variety of purposes—for pleasure, information, and exploration.*

4. ***Skilled Reading Leaders***   *Teachers and school librarians who continually seek to renew their skills and excitement in sharing reading with young people through participation in diverse professional developmental activities.*

5. ***Public Library Support***   *Public libraries that provide services specifically designed to engage young people's interest in reading.*

6. ***Community Agency Support***   *Community-based programs that encourage them in all aspects of their reading activities.*

7. ***Family Support***   *Opportunities for reading at home and support from schools, public libraries, and community agencies to families with young adolescents to encourage family reading activities.*

8. ***Reading Role Models***   *Communities of Readers in which all adults—in school, at home, and across the community—serve as role models and provide guidance to ensure that reading is a priority in young people's lives.*

*By strengthening and bringing together these eight components, we believe that we can make Indiana a **Community of Readers** in which young adolescents will thrive. Indeed, it is only in such an environment that young people will have the opportunities to become prepared to meet challenges of the future. (Humphrey, 1995).*

The 1992 Middle Grades Reading Network study documented that there is a weak link in the educational conduit from the elementary to the secondary reading programs. The results clearly showed that many adolescents in Indiana schools were not provided the critical elements found in the Reading Bill of Rights.

"Reading is the most important, fundamental ability taught in the nation's schools. It is vital to society and to the people within it. It is the door to knowledge and a capability that can liberate people both intellectually and personally" (National Assessment Governing Board, 1992, p.1).

In order to create this continuum of meaningful reading experiences for our middle grades and high school students, there must be careful on-going planning and implementation preceded by the genuine commitment of the entire school community and society as a whole. Realizing the importance of this commitment as well as the indisputable realization that our country's future depends on the ability of societal members to read and carefully discern and comprehend a daily bombardment of information, the Middle Grades Reading Network began a series of projects to promote reading in Indiana's middle grades schools. In conjunction with these projects the Network distributed over 300,000 books appropriate for young readers in Indiana middle, junior, and senior high schools as well as Indiana teacher education institutions (Humphrey, Lipsitz, McGovern & Wasser,1997).

People can best gain knowledge and understand the thoughts and successes of others through reading (Olcott et al., 1913). It was a famous librarian who once said: "Through reading, knowledge is made cumulative, so that one generation may stand on the shoulders of the preceding. It is not its intellect that renders the modern world superior to antiquity, but its intellect, plus the heritage of two thousand years of thought and discovery transmitted to it through books" (Koopman: The Mastery of Books in Olcott et al., 1913, p. 133).

Realizing this concept, in 1997-2003 the Network supported legislative efforts to fund The Library Materials Grant Program in Indiana that ultimately funded a total of thirteen million dollars for Indiana Kindergarten through grade twelve school libraries. The impact of those funds, matched by school district funds, indicated that there was a substantial increase in book circulation and independent reading as well as book purchases. When the funding was reduced in 2000 and 2001, book purchases also decreased and book circulation increases were smaller. This revealed a direct link between purchasing new books and book circulation that ultimately leads to less independent reading (Plucker, Humphrey, Kearns, & Walter, 2002).

Because research proves that increased leisure reading improves reading achievement and test scores (Krashen, 1993; Sanacore, 1988; Pearson, 1993; Mullis, Owen, & Phillips, 1990), it can be inferred that a decrease in funding resulting in fewer books and less circulation will result in lower reading achievement and

lower test scores.

During this period more work was done at the state level to promote reading. In August of 1999 the Indiana State Board of Education approved the revised Kindergarten through grade twelve course titles and course descriptions that shall be taught in Indiana schools. Any other courses taught need a special waiver from the Indiana Department of Education. Over 100 educators and community members participated in this endeavor. The subject of Reading was retained and the orientation to reading skills was strengthened at all levels and aligned with the Indiana reading standards.

The Indiana Professional Standards Board also recognized the importance of reading in Indiana schools and approved reading licenses for each developmental level at the Bachelor degree level: Early Childhood (Preschool and Primary), Middle Childhood (Intermediate), Early Adolescence (Middle/Junior High), Adolescence/Young Adulthood (High School), and reading specialist at the masters degree level. Indiana now has 251 middle grades schools that have separate reading classes and can take advantage of teachers with reading licenses. The Indiana Professional Standards Board also recognized the need for separate reading standards for pre-service teachers and approved new reading standards Kindergarten through grade twelve and for reading specialists at the masters degree level.

Response to Questionnaire

In order to obtain the data concerning the status of reading in Indiana public middle, junior, and senior high schools, as identified by the Indiana Department of Education, questionnaires were sent to public schools in the spring of 1992 and the spring of 2003.

A total of 460 or 74.8 percent of the schools responded to the questionnaire in 1992 and 208 or 33.8 percent responded to the 2003 survey. Although the percent rate of return was much less in 2003 making it difficult to compare results between the two studies, the results are nevertheless revealing. The fact that the response was less in the 2003 survey raises many questions about the actual commitment to reading in Indiana school communities. Part of the problem may be due to severe budgetary problems within the state that were transmitted to the schools during the 2001-2002 and 2003-2004 school years.

Staff Development for Reading Teachers

Even though effective instruction in reading has not changed appreciably in the last 100 years, there have been and will be many twists and turns in the process particularly as the school student clientele changes in the special needs categories.

Morrow (2003) and Bean (2004) remind us that professional development must

be a priority, and emphasis should be on assisting teachers to reflect on their teaching practices, research-based strategies, and various pedagogical strategies, as well as striving to develop a professional community within their organizations. Daniels (2003) urges the development of teacher book clubs that are supported by the school district. This type of professional development not only exhibits teachers as good role models and their own dedication to books and reading but gives a strong message that the district believes in and trusts its staff to pursue the responsibility for continued professional growth and decision-making.

Further, not only teachers in the field need on-going professional development, the importance needs to be stressed in pre-service education as well. Teachers at various stages of teacher preparation and practicing teachers are at different levels of expertise (Vacca & Vacca, 2002), thus staff development needs to be well-designed, well-planned, and implemented so that attitudes and beliefs change in a positive way and that learning in the classroom is affected. As a result of a study conducted by the National Commission on Excellence in Elementary Teacher Preparation in Reading Instruction, where 1000 reading teachers were surveyed, Manzo (2003) reported that teacher preparation programs should contain the following critical features: "a comprehensive curriculum that helps students acquire a cohesive knowledge base on literacy; field experiences related to coursework; a vision of literacy and high-quality teaching and preparation; sufficient resources to support the program's mission; teaching personalized to the individual needs of preservice teachers; autonomy of teacher education programs within institutions; a learning community among faculty, students, and mentor teachers; and continual assessment of students, the program, and faculty."

The report concluded that it is the teacher who makes the difference, not the instructional method. The features of this study obviously apply to middle school and junior/senior high school educators as well.

The proof is in the pudding. Mr. Anthony Alvoredo, Superintendent of # 2 School District in New York strongly believes that quality teachers and good instruction are critical to reading success and higher test scores that would ultimately benefit other areas of instruction. Literacy instruction was the primary focus for the first five years of his superintendency. He searched for and hired the best teachers he could find and who ultimately assisted in training and collaborating with other staff members. Test scores in all subjects improved (Wagner, 2003).

Table 1 compiles the Indiana survey respondents' estimates of the hours of staff development for Indiana's middle, junior, and senior high school reading teachers. The average amount of time per teacher spent in a year for staff development in reading, including college courses and conferences, was 3.8 hours in 1992 and increased to 12.8 hours in 2003. However, schools in the 1992 survey listed some language arts teachers as reading teachers, so there were fewer reading teachers but more staff development for them.

Table 1.

Hours of Staff Development for Reading Teachers					
Number of Reading Teachers		Number of Hours of Staff Development		Average Number of Hours of Staff Development	
1992	2003	1992	2003	1992	2003
3,563	316	13,508	4,033	3.8	12.8

Table 2 shows that in 1992, 51 or 11.2 percent and in 2003, 75 or 37.9 percent of the schools have a planned staff development program for their reading teachers. This includes workshops, seminars, college courses, conferences, and visitations by teachers to other reading teachers' classrooms. The largest group of schools, 283 or 62.1 percent in 1992 and 71 or 35.6 percent in 2003, have no planned staff development programs for reading teachers, but teachers are active in the local and state reading councils, are involved in other organizations where they can enhance their professional development, and attend college classes. Another 122 schools, or 26.7 percent in 1992 and 52 or 26.2 percent in 2003, have no planned staff development programs; and their staff members do not participate in professional organizations. Overall, results show a distinct increase in planned staff development from 1992 to 2003.

Table 2.

Staff Development for Reading Teachers					
Planned Staff Development		No Planned Staff Development But Teachers Involved in Personal Professional Development		No Planned Staff Development and Teachers Not Involved in Personal Professional Development	
1992	2003	1992	2003	1992	2003
51 (11.2%)	75 (37.9%)	283 (62.1%)	71 (35.6%)	122 (26.7%)	52 (26.2%)

Table 3 shows that 112 or 24.5 percent of schools in 1992 and 31 or 16 percent of schools in 2003 have a planned program to encourage teachers to read. In 1992 it should be noted that sixty-five of the schools that have a program to encourage teachers to read are participating in the Teachers Under Cover project sponsored by the University of Southern Indiana and funded by Lilly Endowment Inc. This program provided books for small groups of teachers who read and discuss books of their choice. Without the Teachers Under Cover project, only 47 schools (out of the 458 responding) said that they had programs to encourage teachers to read. There is no data available as to those still participating in the program in 2003. In summary, there are fewer programs to encourage teachers to read.

Table 3.

Schools With Programs to Encourage Teachers to Read					
Yes		No		Number Who Participate	
1992	2003	1992	2003	1992	2003
112 (24.5%)	31(16.0%)	346 (75.5%)	163 (84%)	2,151	1,659

Table 4 indicates the frequency that school staff members report that they read and discussed books. In 1992, 81 or 18 percent and in 2003, 39 or 19.5 percent did so. Overall by 2003, there were fewer programs in effect that encouraged teachers to read, but the frequency that school staff read and discussed books was about the same.

Table 4.

Frequency That School Staffs Read and Discuss Books					
Frequently Read and Discuss Books		Occasionally Read and Discuss Books		Almost Never Read and Discuss Books	
1992	2003	1992	2003	1992	2003
81 (18.0%)	39 (19.5%)	283 (62.7%)	125 (62.5%)	87 (19.3%)	36 (18%)

Special Assistance in Reading

Students have more difficulty in reading than any other subject because all subjects require reading in order to understand content. Even the bright or average child can have a disability that prevents the adequate development of reading ability and necessitates additional special instruction (Blanchard, 1928). Many students reach middle school and high school without the needed strategies to cope with the depth of reading required and skills to become independent readers and learners. Many learning opportunities happen in activities after school, yet many disadvantaged youth lack the opportunities to engage in these positive growth opportunities.

Effective instruction continues to be the key, and in-school and after school tutorial and small group programs that are congruent with classroom instruction (congruent but not "more of the same") are beneficial to these struggling readers. (Quatroche, 2000; Salinger, 2003).

The Federal Government's largest Elementary and Secondary School Program (ESEA Title I) has distributed billions of dollars into programs in order to improve reading and math skills for America's disadvantaged learners. These ESEA programs (in effect since 1965 and monetary statistics available since 1980) with funding totals available to Local Educational Agencies (LEA) provided $2.7 billion in 1980 with yearly increases to $6.1 billion in 1992 and $11.7 billion in 2003. In 2003 Indiana received $146,473,711 of the total dollars allocated to Title I (US Department of Education Budget Office, 2003).

Yet Title I scores in reading on the 2002 NAEP at the Basic and Proficient levels indicated that schools that did not participate in Title I had higher scores than those schools that did participate in Title I (National Center for Education Statistics, 1992-2003). Since remedial-type students generally have about 1.080 hours of instructional time in school and an average of about seventy-two hours of extra assistance, mostly from Title I and at-risk-type programs that generally take them away from regular classroom instruction, one could hardly expect much improvement in overall academic performance. This places the additional financial burden on the school district to provide more funding to help these students (Rotberg & Harvey, 1993).

In the 1990-91 school year, 253,438 Indiana public school students were eligible for Title I services, but only 85,598 or 33.5 percent of these students received the needed services. In 2003 there were 143,458 eligible for help and 119,134 or 83 percent received the needed services. The largest number of students served was in the primary grades.

Table 5.

Participation of Indiana Public School Students in ESEA Chapter I Program				
Grade	Number of Students		Percent of Chapter I Students	
	1992	2003	1992	2003
Pre K	792	3,236	0.9	2.7
K	8,859	17,999	10.3	15.1
1	16,320	23,922	19.1	20.1
2	11,614	20,341	13.6	17.1
3	10,686	15,337	12.5	12.9
4	10,009	12,633	11.7	10.6
5	9,512	12,266	11.1	10.3
6	7,775	6,587	9.1	5.5
7	4,063	3,177	4.7	2.6
8	3,894	2,855	4.5	2.4
9	1,463	350	1.7	0.3
10	414	188	0.5	0.2
11	129	159	0.1	0.1
12	68	84	0.1	0.1
Total	85,598	119,134	99.9	100
Source: Indiana Department of Education				

This focus on the lower grades means that many Indiana middle, junior, and senior high school students are deprived of badly needed help. Compared to 1992, there is a much higher percentage of students now enrolled in Title I programs and a much lower percentage of students enrolled in subsequent grades. There are now 105,734 (88.8%) students through the fifth grade that participate in Title I programs while only 12,619 (10.6%) are involved in the sixth through eighth grades and 781 (.6%) in the ninth through twelfth grades. These figures in both 1990-91

and 2002-2003 may be more serious than indicated, since some educators feel that students in need of remedial services are undercounted in the upper grades. Local school corporations have some discretion in setting priorities for distribution of Title l support. The limited Title l support may be supplemented by other funds in some corporations. (i.e., Remediation and other At Risk funds). However, it remains true that Indiana school corporations tend to offer much less assistance in reading to students as they move to higher grade levels.

Table 6 shows that in 1992 there were 35,784 students or 11.3 percent who read two grade levels below their grade placement in reading. In 2003 the total reading below grade level was 17,595 or 11.4 percent. In 1992 a total of 22,088 or 61.7 percent and in 2003 a total of 9,448 or 53.7 percent of these students are receiving special help in reading leaving 38.3 percent in 1992 and 46.3 percent in 2003 without any special help in reading. There is a definite decline in students receiving special help in reading from 1992 to 2003.

Table 6.

Students Two Grade Levels Below Grade Placement in Reading and Number Receiving Special Help in Reading					
Two Grade Levels Below in Reading		Number of students Receiving Special Help in Reading		Number of Students Not Receiving Special Help in Reading	
1992	2003	1992	2003	1992	2003
35,784 (11.3%)	17,595 (11.4%)	22,088 (61.7%)	9,448 (53.7%)	13,696 (38.3%)	8,147 (46.3%)

Table 7 shows the extent of programs for students who need special help in reading. In 1992, while just under one-fourth (106) of the 460 schools had Title l support available, slightly more than one-forth of the schools reported having other remediation programs. In 2003 the number of schools with Title I support dropped to 6.4 percent (13). One hundred thirteen (113) of these schools in 1992 and 47 in 2003 had reading courses. In 1992 almost 27 percent received other help including tutoring services while in 2003 the percent raised to just over 36 percent. Sadly, the remaining fourth in 1992 and 34.2 percent in 2003 report that they have no special help available for their poor readers. Overall, there has been a decline in Title l services and other remedial reading classes in Indiana between 1992 and 2003.

Table 7.

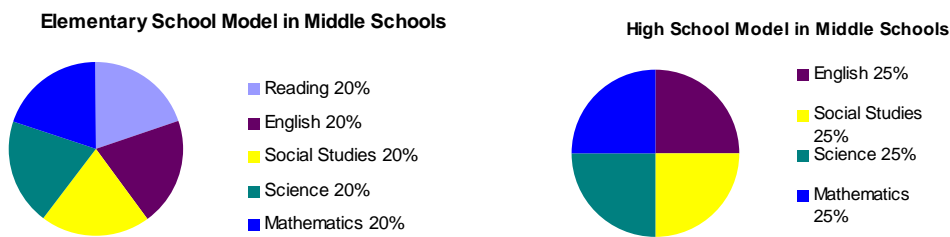| Remedial Reading Program Available for Students Needing Special Help (Excludes Special Education)							
Title I		Reading Courses		Other		No Help Provided	
1992	2003	1992	2003	1992	2003	1992	2003
106 (23.2%)	13 (6.4%)	113 (24.7%)	47 (23.3%)	122 (26.7%)	73 (36.1%)	116 (25.4%)	69 (34.2%)

Because there are still a substantial number of students who do not receive special assistance in reading, there will likely be large numbers of Indiana students who continue to drop out of high school. Even if they do receive diplomas, these students will not have the reading skills needed to be productive wage earners in today's job market. The fact that many schools lack planned programs designed to help their older students become proficient readers continues to diminish the chances for some students to complete high school and lead productive lives.

Time for Reading Instruction

In their investigations, Rosenshine and Stevens (1984) found that there is a high correlation between student engagement—the time in school that a student is actually reading or doing other class work versus sharpening a pencil or other nonacademic activities—and reading achievement gain. When more time is allocated for reading, there is no evidence of a diminishing return on engagement rates. For example, if eighth grade students have one period of reading and one period of language arts, the return should be twice as great for both language arts and reading as compared to one period of language arts that includes both reading and English. McEwan (2004) states that, in addition to providing more time for reading instruction, this instructional time must be used effectively to make a difference in achievement and raise test scores. This is especially important for low achievers. Thus, the amount and quality of time allocated for the student to participate in reading is a major indicator of instructional effectiveness.

Students in grades 6-8 may have four or five periods of content area subjects, depending on whether an elementary or a high school pattern is followed. Figure 1 shows that the elementary model provides 20 percent for reading and 20 percent for English/language arts for a total of 40 percent of the content-subject-area time, while the high school model provides a total of 25 percent of the content-subject-area time for English/language arts. Clearly, the elementary school model provides more time for students within subject-area classes to become proficient readers and writers.

Figure 1.
Comparison of Elementary and High School Models in Middle Schools

Elementary School Model in Middle Schools

- Reading 20%
- English 20%
- Social Studies 20%
- Science 20%
- Mathematics 20%

High School Model in Middle Schools

- English 25%
- Social Studies 25%
- Science 25%
- Mathematics 25%

Reading courses differ from language arts courses (See Appendix B). Middle level reading course descriptions for Middle Level Reading, Grades 6, 7, and 8, include word recognition skills, vocabulary, comprehension, independent reading, and literature. Middle Level Language Arts, Grades 6, 7, and 8, include oral communication, writing process, grammar, usage, mechanics, spelling, listening, and speaking (Holland, 1999).

In the fall of 2002, Indiana schools reported that 89.9 percent of sixth grade students were enrolled in reading classes, 42.8 percent of seventh grade students, and 35.2 percent of eighth grade students were enrolled in reading classes for a total of 52.8 percent, At the same time, the Indiana Department of Education reported that only 36.3 percent of sixth graders, 17.9 percent of seventh graders, and 14.5 percent of eighth graders were enrolled in middle level reading courses 0480-06, 0480-07, and 0480-08 (Humphrey, Winter, 2002, pp 2-5,11). In order to provide reading courses, teachers must have a reading license, so they are either counting language arts as reading or are providing reading classes without licensed reading teachers. During the 2002-2003 school year, the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) listed 251 schools now providing reading courses with licensed reading teachers.

Major Influence on Reading Program

Table 8 shows that, overall, there has been no significant improvement for school staffs to receive outside assistance in improving reading instruction. Since 1992 the increase in IDOE state assistance increased from 11.3 percent to 13.7 percent and is most likely due to increased workshops and information regarding the new standards, course descriptions, ISTEP testing, and the Graduation Qualifying Exam (GQE).

Table 8.

Major Influence on Reading Programs											
Indiana Department of Education		International Reading Association		College or University		Within Corporation		Individual School		Other	
1992	2003	1992	2003	1992	2003	1992	2003	1992	2003	1992	2003
50	27	10	4	6	1	140	55	196	92	42	18
11.3%	(13.7%)	2.3%	(2.0%)	1.3%	(.5%)	31.5%	(27.9%)	44.1%	(46.7%)	9.5%	(9.1%)

Although the difference between 1992 (2.3%) and 2003 (2.0%) is slight, discussions with ISRA and IRA officials, teachers, and administrators in Indiana schools revealed that reduced budget allocations (to school districts) at the state level resulted in fewer staff members participating in Indiana and national reading association activities as well as other staff development sessions.

Indiana is an NCATE partnership state. This accrediting body stresses the importance of school/university partnerships and requires extensive diverse field experiences that require collaboration with the K-12 schools as well as providing professional development to the supervising teachers. Yet Indiana teachers feel that they received even less help in 2003 (.5%) in reading than they did in 1992 (1.3%).

Further, it is evident that staffs in many school districts and in many individual schools do not look to colleges and universities, professional organizations, and outside influences to help them with their reading programs even though much help should be provided from these sources. Teachers have fewer opportunities to attend state and national reading meetings, and there is an increasing disconnection between higher education and K-12 schools. This is evidenced by the increase in the individual school influence from 44.1 percent in 1992 to 46.7 percent in 2003.

School Library Media Center

The quality of school libraries is a significant measure of the caliber of middle, junior, and senior high schools. Major studies during the last fifty years substantiate that reading achievement is increased by quality library collections and regular student use of the library (Didier, 1984; Lance, 1994; McQuillian, 1998; Lance & Loertscher, 2001; Haycock, 2003).

Lance and Loertscher (2001) state that as a result of their recent study of 933 schools in Alaska, Pennsylvania, and Colorado, scores were 10 to 20 percent higher in schools where libraries have strong library specialists who collaborate with teachers, teach information literacy, promote reading, and see to it that collections are current and ample. Library collections must be current and of high quality, be adequately funded, and staffed by certified librarians. Certified librarians are a critical entity in school libraries (Wisely, 2003). In Indiana, Table 9 shows that in 1992, 5.2 percent of the survey respondents reported no certified librarian and in 2003 this increased to 6.9 percent.

Table 9.

Certified Librarians					
Certified Librarians		No Certified Librarians			No Response
1992	2003	1992	2003	1992	2003
433 (94.1%)	192 (94.1%)	24 (5.2%)	14 (6.9%)	3 (0.7%)	0 (0.0%)

Baughman (2000), in a study of the Massachusetts school libraries, found that there was a definite link between school achievement and school libraries. Scores were higher where there was a full-time librarian, higher per pupil expenditures, a library instruction program, and more books per pupil. In his extensive report, Baughman discusses the 1987 School Match Database that consisted of almost 35,000 public and private schools. The conclusion drawn from this vast study was that clearly "Of all the expenditures that influence a school's effectiveness—including

those for facilities, teachers, guidance services, and others—the level of expenditures for library and media services has the highest correlation with student achievement." The effect on achievement does not matter whether students come from poor socio-economic backgrounds. And interestingly, both NAEP and SAT scores are positively affected by access to books in a school library (McQuillan, 1998).

There is considerable evidence that middle school students will read current, interesting, and attractive books, but they are not interested in reading out-of-date books. To maintain current book collections, school libraries should be adding two books per student per year. They should discard most of the books that are older than 10 years of age and have not been checked out in the past few years (Humphrey, 2002).   In addition, a 1999 International Reading Association position paper states that there should be 20 books for each student in school libraries. This means that adequate weeding of old books must take place. Books should be removed if they are more than ten years old, of no special historical or literary significance, and have not been checked out during the past year (Slote, 1952).

In Indiana the Indiana Administrative Code, 511 IAC 6.1-5-6 Media Program, states that "each school shall spend at least eight dollars ($8) per student per year from its 22000 account to maintain its media program." (Rund, 2002-2003). In 1989 the average cost of a book was $8, but today it is almost $19 (St. Lifer, 2002).

The Indiana General Assembly recognized the importance of keeping school libraries current by appropriating $13 million for library books for schools from 1997-2003. The average number of new books increased from .81 in 1997 to 1.14 in 1998 and 1.24 in 2000 but dropped to 1.01 in 2002. Circulation rose from 33.8 in 1997 to 37.2 in 1998 and 39.0 in 2000 but slowed to 39.2 in 2002. The range of books purchased by schools varied widely throughout the state. Some schools purchased no books during 2001-2002 and others purchased fewer than 100 books despite the fact that the grant required matching funds and the Department of Education stipulates that $8 per student needs to be spent for library materials (Humphrey, 2002).

This may account for the slightly lower number of books circulated per student in 2003 (14.3) than in 1992 (15.3) and the average number of checked out books in 2003 (.29) than 1992 (.38) as shown in Table 10. Even though the availability of state funds has decreased in 2001 and beyond (Humphrey, 2002), and despite the fact that book costs have doubled, book expenditures for Indiana schools have increased slightly from $7.38 in 1992 to $7.81 per student in 2003 as shown in Table 11. The average number of new books per student increased from .59 in 1992 to .70 in 2003. Thus, Indiana school administrators are finding local funds to support their school libraries.

Table 10.

School Library Media Center Book Collections and Circulation							
Number of Books		Average Number of Books Per Student		Number of Books Checked Out		Average Number of Books Checked Out Per Student	
1992	2003	1992	2003	1992	2003	1992	2003
4,854,980	2,199,968	15.3	14.3	121,725	43,890	.38	.29

Table 11.

Book Expenditures							
New Books		Average Number of New Books Per Student		Book Expenditures		Average Book Expenditures Per Student	
1992	2003	1992	2003	1992	2003	1992	2003
186,323	106,966	.59	.70	$2,333,545	$1,202,281	$7.38	$7.81

Voluntary Reading

Anecdotal and correlational studies show that voluntary reading should be an integral part of the reading program because it allows students to gain practice in skills they have been taught. Children will enjoy voluntary reading more; however, if they have the opportunity to select interesting materials to read and are in a physical environment that is supportive (Morrow in Flood et al., 1991; Roe, 1992; Wood, 1993). Moreover, McCune (2002) stresses voluntary reading in summer programs and says that it increases reading fluency.

It is a "must" for students to have easy access to a wide variety of current reading materials and ample time to read independently. This significantly increases the knowledge of vocabulary resulting in greater success in school as well as the world of work (Baumann & Kame'enui, 2004). Surveys of the literature provide data that show students who engage in voluntary reading regularly surpass readers who do not read voluntarily. Within this context, voluntary reading can help adolescents access information in the middle school, junior high, and high school content areas, read novels or information by particular authors they like, and read and sort out information they may need in writing activities (Duffey, 1990).

Krashen (1993 & 2001) reviewed several studies where he found that when students read more on a regular basis, their test scores in reading improve. Other authors who surveyed the literature found the results to be similar (Broaddus & Ivey, 2002; Plucker, Humphrey, Kearns, & Walter, 2002; Lipsitz, 1984).

The correlation between reading achievement and recreational reading strongly

supports the need to promote and encourage children's voluntary reading. Children who score at the ninetieth percentile on reading tests read five times as much as children at the fiftieth percentile and two hundred times as much as children at the tenth percentile. Further, children who do a considerable amount of voluntary reading also have positive attitudes towards reading (Anderson, Fielding & Wilson,1988; Greaney, 1980).

Clary (1991) provided six classroom strategies to encourage adolescents to read:

- Capitalize on student interest;
- Make reading material accessible;
- Build a conducive reading environment;
- Allow time to read in school;
- Provide significant adult role models; and
- Use motivational techniques.

One example can be found in a report of a study conducted over the period from 1998 through 2001 at South Central Community Schools in northern Indiana. Angelos and McGriff (2002) report that the focus was on sixth grade because students took the ISTEP test after participating in motivational, voluntary reading programs. Additional reading materials were purchased for the library and resulted in an increased circulation rate. High school students joined the program in 2001. Results are not yet available for this group. The sixth grade students had modest overall gains in reading achievement.

Students need a wide variety of reading material because they have various motivations for reading. The extrinsic goals are generally teacher initiated and the intrinsic goals are student initiated. Teachers need to know individual needs of students, background experiences, and students' interests. It is imperative that teachers and all school staff members be good role models that are seen reading and discussing books. These habits also motivate students to discuss books with their friends and help to develop a positive attitude toward reading (Guthrie, Bennett, & Faibisch, 1996; Greaney, 1980). Teachers should support students' voluntary reading by reading books that their students read and discussing these books with students. Further, even at the middle school, junior, and senior high school levels, teachers and administrators should read to students regularly.

Table 12 shows the perceptions of educators concerning the percentage of their adolescent students who read books not connected with schoolwork from the school, a public library, or other sources. Almost two-thirds of the schools, or 63.8 percent in 1992 and 54.3 percent in 2003, estimate that 40 percent or fewer of their students read for pleasure. Only 4.4 percent of the respondents believe that 80 percent or more of their students in 1992 and 15.1 percent in 2003 read for pleasure; and 12.7 percent in 1992 and 27.2 percent in 2003 say that more than 60 percent of their students read books not connected with schoolwork. These results show a definite overall improvement in voluntary reading in the schools since 1992.

Table 12.

Estimates by Educators of Percent of Students Who Read for Pleasure									
0-20%		21-40%		41-60%		61-80%		80+%	
1992	2003	1992	2003	1992	2003	1992	2003	1992	2003
114	34	177	74	107	3	38	24	20	30
(25.0%)	(17.1%)	(38.8%)	(37.2%)	(25.5%)	(18.6%)	(8.3%)	(12.1%)	(4.4%)	(15.1%)

Table 13 lists the reason why educators thought that Indiana's middle, junior, and senior high school students were not engaged with books. The most significant factor was low interest in books among students. Seventy-eight percent of the schools listed this as a problem in 1992 and 70.5 percent believe this to be a problem in 2003.

There seems to still be somewhat of an issue with weeding and obtaining current library material. Although not significant, there was a raise of .7 percent in the "books not current" category. Schools are recognizing that many students have poor reading skills (2.7 percent in 1992 and 10.8 percent in 2003), and most educators still believe that students are not interested in reading. Yet, according to Broaddus and Ivey (1999) when they asked middle school students what they enjoyed most about their reading and language arts classes, they said that they liked to read independently.

Table 13.

Reasons Educators Perceive That Students Are Not Engaged With Books							
Low Interest		Books Not Current		Poor Reading Skills		Other	
1992	2003	1992	2003	1992	2003	1992	2003
267	98	10	5	9	15	53	21
(78.8%)	(70.5%)	(2.9%)	(3.6%)	(2.7%)	(10.8%)	(15.6%)	(15.1%)

Family Support for Adolescent Reading Development

For generations the importance of parents and family members providing a positive reading environment in the home has been touted as paramount to educational success in school and is supported by evidence that there is a correlation between family support and reading success (Olcott et al., 1913; Sucher, Manning, & Manning, 1980; Henderson & Berla, 1994; US Department of Education, 2002).

Yet, Table 14 shows that only one-fifth of the schools involved in both the 1992 and the 2003 studies reported that they have programs to encourage parents to read and discuss books with their teenage children. These results show little change in the approximate ten-year period between 1992 and the first quarter of 2003.

Table 14.

Programs to Encourage Parents to Read to Their Students			
Yes		No	
1992	2003	1992	2003
95 (20.9%)	28 (17.0%)	360 (79.1%)	137 (83.0%)

Since children spend less than 15 percent of their waking hours in the school setting and Indiana schools typically are in session only 180 days each year, parents play a critical and continuing role as models for their children. Many parents tend to neglect this important aspect in their children's lives especially during the teenage years when motivation and collaborative relationships between schools and home is so important to promote continued literacy development. Adolescents are great imitators.   When parents are seen reading a variety of materials provided in the home, talk about books, encourage the use of the public library, carry reading materials and play audio-book tapes when traveling with their adolescent children, and starting a family book club, their children's success in reading and other academic subjects can increase significantly (Kuersten, 2003; US Department of Education, 2002; Krashen, 1993; Brozo & Simpson, 1999; Langer, Applebee, Mullis, & Foertsch, 1990; McEwan, 2004).

A more direct approach for parental involvement was contained in a successful Parents Sharing Books program at 67 sites involving Indiana parents that encouraged parents to read with their children. Since reading, for adolescents, generally peaks about age 12 and diminishes thereafter, this role-modeling program would seem to be a logical approach to promote continued positive reading habits. Pre and post- survey results revealed that, indeed, this was the case. Sixty-five percent of parents read regularly and 21 percent were trying to set a regular time for reading (Simic, 1992). Other positive results of the program were evident in both parent and student responses that indicated that parents and children discussed books and other reading materials with each other, talked about school and personal matters, and read to each other on a more frequent basis. Smith and Simic (1993) indicated that overall program-significant benefits were evident, but the collaboration between home and school assisted in the success when parents were given meaningful direction and varied approaches to implement the program.

The Family Literacy Center at Indiana University continues to sponsor this program available for young adolescents in schools throughout Indiana.

School and Public Library Relationship

Public libraries were an important educational and informational source for some 20 million people in the late 1880s and early 1900s, and today are still the "potentially strongest and most far-reaching community resource for lifelong learning" (Breivik, 1991).

A number of studies have indicated the need for increased library services including summer programs for middle-grades and high school youth (Weisner, 1992; Chelton, 1989; Callison, 1993; Nelson, 1993; Bean, 2004) and increased cooperation between school and public libraries, which could include visits by public librarians to schools as well as frequent communication and planning sessions among the librarians.

McQuillan (1998) comments that one of the best predicators of NAEP and SAT test scores is access to books. School and public library circulation rates and the number of books available to students are critical factors to student reading achievement. Public libraries provide needed access to books for many families who cannot afford to purchase books and other reading materials. These families tend to turn to the public library to supply reading materials for their children, especially in the summer months when most school libraries are closed.

Cooperation among school and public libraries, as well as encouraging community leaders and other community agencies, to provide up-to-date reading materials and serve as role models is critical to the total life-long literacy development of youth. Callison (1991) conducted a national telephone survey involving 147 public libraries. He found that 59 percent of public librarians had not met with school librarians during the year to talk about cooperative-type activities, 46 percent could not name the junior high school librarian, and 39 percent of junior high school librarians did not know the public librarian. The follow-up mail survey revealed a most disappointing bit of news in that over 33 percent of the junior high school librarians had no idea what expectations their students had regarding the public library. Callison concluded that there is a definite need for public and school librarians to spend more time communicating, networking, and joining efforts if students are to gain maximum benefit from library services.

Fitzgibbons and Pungitore (1989) conducted an extensive study of Indiana's 239 public libraries and found that between 70 and 80 percent of the state's libraries provided educationally-related materials to assist students in grades one through eight. Students in grades nine through twelve were able to find help with school work in 80 percent of the libraries. Homework support was the service selected as the most prominent. Seventy-seven percent of the libraries encouraged classes to visit the library, and 56 percent of the librarians visited schools.

Summer reading programs were offered by 86 percent of the libraries. Fitzgibbons and Pungitore (1989) report that regular summer reading significantly increases vocabulary test scores of students.   Because school libraries are rarely open in the summer months, public libraries are left to take up the slack in this most vital service.

Table15 shows the estimates by educators of student use of public libraries in Indiana's middle, junior, and senior high schools. The majority of the schools in the 1992 study, 67.7 percent, report that 30 percent or fewer of the students used the nearest public library. In 2003 this declined to 65.4 percent. In the 1992 study 8.2

percent of the schools report that 51 or higher percentages of their students use the nearest public library on a regular basis. This dropped to 6.2 percent in the 2003 study. This finding tends to substantiate that elementary students make more use of the public library then do middle, junior, or senior high school students (Robbins and Thompson, 1991).

Table 15.

Educators' Estimate of Student Use of Public Libraries											
0-10%		11-30%		31-50%		51-70%		71-90%		91+%	
1992	2003	1992	2003	1992	2003	1992	2003	1992	2003	1992	2003
69 (15.4%)	35 (18.%)	235 (52.3%)	92 (47.4%)	108 (24.1%)	35 (28.4%)	26 (5.8%)	10 (5.2%)	10 (2.2%)	2 (1.0%)	1 (0.2%)	0 (0.0 %)

Community Programs to Help Engage Students with Books

Literacy rates across the world have improved over the years to a reported 79 percent in 1998. Oddly enough, the highest rates are in East Asia, the Pacific, Central Asia, and Central and Eastern Europe. Sadly, this is not true in the United States.

Results of a study involving 15,700 individuals, including 1100 prison inmates, proved that there is a definite link between employment status and literacy (Fitzgibbons, 2000). This alone should motivate collaboration between schools and community agencies including area colleges and universities.

In the United States Children's Book Week in the Fall and National Library Week in the Spring, and in Indiana, the Young Hoosier Book Award in the elementary and middle schools and the Eliot Rosewater Indiana High School Book Award in the high schools as well as Newspaper In Education Week, held in the spring, are ways for the community and parents to get involved. Some ways this can be done is by donating books, participating in discussion groups, reading to students, sponsoring these and other reading incentive programs that could include promoting reading through the local media, including television, and radio, road-side advertising boards, and even displays and posters in local businesses.

Community organizations can form partnerships with and extend the work of the schools to promote literacy. Universities and colleges should find ways to form partnerships with schools. This could be done in a variety of ways such as collaborating with school faculty in action research, teaching reading classes at school sites, modeling and coaching staff, providing current reading resources and information and conducting workshops, sponsoring book clubs, and holding meetings to discuss changes and improvements in pre-service learning (Bean, 2004).

Instruction can certainly be enriched by school-community partnerships (Carnegie Council, 1989), and community-based programs can offer special help to students who have experienced academic failure in school, as well as to all other students (Davidson & Koppenhaver, 1998; Bean, 2004).

Table 16 indicates the respondents' perceptions that 62.3 percent in 1992 and 60.9 percent in 2003 have programs in their communities to help engage students with books. Nineteen percent (1992) and 18.3 percent (2003) report that their communities do not have programs while 18.7 percent (1992) and 20.8 percent (2003) report that they do not know if their communities have programs. These results show a slight decline between 1992 and 2003 in community involvement to engage students with books.

Table 16.

Programs in the Community to Help Engage Students with Books					
Community Does Have Program		Community Does Not Have Program		Do Not Know if Community Has a Program	
1992	2003	1992	2003	1992	2003
282 (62.3%)	120 (60.9%)	86 (19.0%)	36 (18.3%)	85 (18.7%)	41 (20.8%)

Comparison of Schools with Low and High Priorities for Reading

There has been some progress since 1992 in recognizing the importance of reading in Indiana's schools as shown in Table 17. A total of 28.5 percent of the respondents in 1992 as compared to 48.5 percent of respondents in 2003 listed reading as a high priority. Only 36.2 percent in 2003 listed reading as an average priority as compared to 59.7 percent in 1992. There was an increase from 11.8 percent in 1992 to 15.3 percent in 2003 in the low priority category. Although there has been significant improvement in the high priority category, much work still needs to be done to motivate all stakeholders in the state to increase the reading success of our students.

Table 17.

Grade Level	High Priority		Average Priority		Low Priority	
	1992	2003	1992	2003	1992	2003
6-8	41 (36.9%)	36 (61.0%)	65 (58.6%)	16 (27.1%)	5 (4.5%)	7 (11.9%)
7-8	17 (27.0%)	8 9 (2.0%)	41 (65.0%)	11 (44.0%)	5 (8.0%)	6 (24.0%)
7-9	2 (18.2%)	0 (0.0%)	7 (63.6%)	0 (0.0%)	2 (18.2%)	0 (0.0%)
7-12	12 (17.4%)	10 (55.6%)	44 (63.8%)	5 (27.8%)	13 (18.8%)	3 (16.6%)
9-12	30 (23.4%)	18 (34.0%)	75 (58.6%)	26 (49.0%)	23 (18.0%)	9 (17.0%)
Other	24 (40.0%)	7 (87.5%)	32 (53.3%)	1 (12.5%)	4 (6.7%)	0 (0.0%)
Total	126 (28.5%)	79 (48.5%)	264 (59.7%)	59 (36.2%)	52 (11.8%)	25 (15.3%)

Priority of Reading in the Schools

Twenty high and 20 low reading priority schools were randomly selected in both the 1992 and 2003 studies. Table 18 shows that the 20 high reading priority schools, when compared to the 20 low reading priority schools for 1992:

- Have a lower percentage of students in the free-reduced-cost lunch program;
- Have higher attendance rates;
- Have three times as much special help in reading;
- Have more than twice the ratio of reading teachers to students;
- Have significantly more reading staff development;
- Have four times as many new books annually added to the school library media center;
- Have twice the library media center book circulation rate;
- Have more programs to encourage parents to read and discuss books with their children;
- Have higher ISTEP reading scores;
- Have more members of the school staff who frequently read and discuss books;
- Have more direction from their school corporations; and
- Have communities that provide programs to help engage students with books.

Table 18.

Comparison of 20 Schools with Low Reading Priorities and 20 Schools with High Reading Priorities, 1992		
	Low Priority	High Priority
Total Number of Students	19,498	12,256
Percent of Students Enrolled in the Free or Reduced-Price Lunch Program	14.8	10.8
Average Percent of Attendance for 1990-1991 School Year	93.7	94.8
No Special Reading Help Available	11 (55%)	1 (5%)
Estimated Number Who Need Special Help in Reading	3,414	1,722
Percent Needing Special Help in Reading	17.5	14.0
Number Receiving Special Help in Reading	855	1,468
Percent of Those Needing Special Help Who Receive Special Help	25.0	85.2
Majority of Reading Materials Not Current	3 (15%)	2 (10%)
Number of Reading Teachers	117	166
Ratio of Reading Teachers to Students	1:167	1:74
Total Number of Hours of Reading Staff Development for Reading Teachers	161	1,039
Average Number of Hours of Staff Development for Reading Teachers	0.7	6.3
School Has a Planned Staff Development Program for Reading Teachers	2 (10%)	6 (30%)
Number of Books Per Student in School Library Media Center	14.2	17.8
New Books Added in School Library Media Center for 1990-1991 School Year	6,204	14,667
Average Number of New Books Per Student Added to the School Library Media Center in 1990-1991 School Year	.3	1.2
School Has a Certified Library Media Specialist	20 (100%)	20 (100%)
Number of Books Checked Out from School Library Media Center During One Week	4,653	5,393
Average Number of Books per Student Checked Out from Library Media Center During One Week	.24	.44
School Encourages Parents to Read and Discuss Books with Their Children	2 (10%)	5 (25%)
Members of the School Staff Frequently Read and Discuss Books	2 (10%)	6 (30%)
School Encourages Teachers to Read	4 (20%)	8 (40%)
More Than 30 Percent of the Student Use the Nearest Public Library	5 (25%)	5 25%)
Community Encourages Students to Read	3 (15%)	15 (75%)
1990 Sixth grade ISTEP Reading Grade Equivalent	604	7.8
1990 Eighth Grade ISTEP Reading Grade Equivalent	9.1	9.6
1990 Ninth Grade ISTEP Reading Grade Equivalent	10.7	11.3

The 20 high reading priority schools, when compared to the 20 low reading priority schools in the 2003 study as shown in Table 19:

- Have about the same percent of students in the free-reduced-cost lunch program;
- Have about the same attendance rates;
- Have twice as much special help in reading;
- Have a higher percent of students needing special help in reading;
- Have more programs for students needing special help;
- Have more current reading materials;
- Have a higher ratio of reading teachers to students;
- Have about the same number of hours of staff development for reading teachers;
- Have a planned staff development program for reading teachers;
- Have about the same number of books in the school library media center;
- Have many more new books in the school library;
- Have twice as much circulation of school library books;
- Have the same number of school librarians;
- Have about the same amount of encouragement for parents to read and discuss books with their children;
- Have more members of the school staff that frequently read and discuss books;
- Have more encouragement for teachers to read;
- Have more students who use the public library; and
- Have less community encouragement for students to read.

Table 19.

Comparison of 20 Schools with Low Reading Priorities and 20 Schools with High Reading Priorities, 2003		
	Low Priority	High Priority
Total Number of Students	14,987	14,143
Percent of Students Enrolled in the Free or Reduced-Price Lunch Program	26.2	27.1
Average Percent of Attendance for 2002-2003 School Year	95.5	95.5
No Special Reading Help Available	12 (60%)	6 (30%)
Estimated Number Who Need Special Help in Reading	2,233	3,014
Percent Needing Special Help in Reading	14.9	21.3
Number Receiving Special Help in Reading	240	1,620
Percent of Those Needing Special Help Who Receive Special Help	10.7	53.7
Majority of Reading Materials Not Current	4 (20%)	1 (5%)
Number of Reading Teachers	28	85
Ratio of Reading Teachers to Students	1:535	1:166
Total Number of Hours of Reading Staff Development for Reading Teachers	176	585
Average Number of Hours of Staff Development for Reading Teachers	6.3	6.9
School Has a Planned Staff Development Program for Reading Teachers	1 (5%)	17 (85%)
Number of Books Per Student in School Library Media Center	232,456	229,636
New Books Added in School Library Media Center for 2002-2003 School Year	9,159	13,452
Average Number of New Books Per Student Added to the School Library Media Center in 2002-2003 School Year	.6	.95
School Has a Certified Library Media Specialist	19 (95%)	19 (95%)
Number of Books Checked Out from School Library Media Center During One Week	3,166	6,303
Average Number of Books per Student Checked Out from Library Media Center During One Week	.21	.45
School Encourages Parents to Read and Discuss Books with Their Children	2 (10%)	3 (15%)
Members of the School Staff Frequently Read and Discuss Books	4 (20%)	7 (35%)
School Encourages Teachers to Read	7 (35%)	12 (60%)
More Than 30 Percent of the Student Use the Nearest Public Library	7 (35%)	10 (50%)
Community Encourages Students to Read	16 (80%)	11 (55%)

In comparing the 1992 and 2003 results, the different results are:

- The percentage of students in the free-reduced-cost lunch program was much higher in 1992 for low reading priority schools but is now about the same for high and low reading priority schools;
- The attendance rate was higher in 1992 for high priority schools but now is about the same;
- The high priority schools had more staff development in 1992 but about the same as low reading priority schools in 2003;
- The high reading priority schools had more programs to encourage parents to read and discuss books with their children in 1992 but were about the same as low reading priority schools in 2003; and
- The high reading priority schools were in communities that provided more programs to help engage students with books but were about the same as low reading priority schools in 2003.

In comparing the 1992 and 2003 results, the results that continue to be the same are:

- High reading priority schools offer more special help in reading;
- High reading priority schools have a higher ratio of reading teachers to students;
- High reading priority schools annually add many more new books to school library book collections;
- High reading priority schools have a larger school library book circulation rate; and
- High reading priority schools have more members of the school staff who frequently read and discuss books.

Promising Practices

The following is a list of promising reading practices listed by the 20 schools in the 2003 study that regard reading as a high priority:

- The school uses Reading Counts.
- Many students participate in the school's 600 minute club.
- The school uses Accelerated Reader.
- Most students read the Young Hoosier Book Award Program books and vote for their favorite book.
- The AIME Read Aloud Program is used.
- The school has a book fair.
- The school has author and storyteller visits.
- Sustained-silent reading is used daily.
- STAR Reading is used.

- Reading Across America is promoted throughout the school.
- Students are encouraged to carry reading books to every class to read when assignments/tests are completed.
- A yearly contest called March Madness is conducted to involve students in reading.
- Books are promoted on the school website.
- Remediation is provided to all students who need special reading help.
- Reading classes are provided for all students.
- All teachers received training in the SQ3R method.
- All students read a minimum of four books per nine weeks in addition to class novels.
- Fifty minute reading labs are used by all students.
- The school works with the public library to provide library cards for students.
- The school librarian provides daily booktalks.
- The school has displays to promote reading.
- Teen Read Week is celebrated.
- Teachers are encouraged to attend state and national reading conferences.
- The school library has the latest "hot" books by the current "hot" authors.
- Students read a selected book of the month during homeroom and some of the students are chosen to participate in a luncheon at a pizza restaurant.
- Students are required to carry reading material with them at all times.
- The Breakfast Book Club involves many students.
- The school has a beginning and end of year reading assessment.

Study Limitations

This analysis has limitations. Schools voluntarily completed and returned the surveys. The data should be interpreted with the knowledge that they do not include all Indiana public middle, junior, and senior high schools.

A related limitation is the self-report nature of the survey. Respondents may have made reporting errors that may influence some of the data.

Conclusions

1. There has been a distinct increase in planned staff development from 1992 to 2003.

2. Fewer programs are in place in 2003 to encourage teachers to read than in 1992.

3. The frequency school staff members read and discuss books is basically the same in 2003 as in 1992.

4. Indiana school corporations continue to offer significantly less Title I reading assistance to students as they move to higher grades.

5. There is a decline in students receiving special help in reading from 1992 to 2003.

6. Many schools continue to lack a planned program designed to help older students become proficient readers.

7. An increased number of middle grades schools in 2003 offer reading courses when compared to 1992.

8. Fewer staff members in 2003 participate in Indiana and national reading activities and other staff development sessions compared to 1992.

9. The major influence on the reading program continues to be the individual school.

10. Per student circulation of school library books was lower in 2003 than in 1992.

11. The average book expenditures per student were about the same in 1992 and 2003 despite the fact that book costs increased over 100 percent during that time.

12. There is an improvement in voluntary reading in 2003 when compared to 1992.

13. Educators continue to feel that students are not engaged with books because of low interest in books among students.

14. Only one-fifth of the schools in 1992 and 2003 had programs to encourage parents to read and discuss books with their children.

15. Most of the students do not use their public library on a regular basis.

16. There is a slight decline between 1992 and 2003 in community involvement to engage students with books.

17. Schools that have a high reading priority offer more special help in reading, have a higher ratio of reading teachers to students, add many more new books to school library book collections, have a larger school library book circulation rate, and have more members of the school staff who frequently read and discuss books.

Recommendations

1. Schools should develop an atmosphere where teachers are good reading role models who read and discuss books of interest to them.

2. School corporations should significantly increase Title I assistance to students beyond elementary schools.

3. Schools should provide reading programs for all students needing special reading help.

4. While schools are providing more staff development at the local level, teachers should be encouraged to participate in state and national reading conferences.

5. Schools should significantly increase funding of school library books.

6. Schools should increase efforts to engage students with independent reading materials in school and public libraries.

7. Schools should increase efforts to encourage parents to read and discuss books with their children.

8. Schools should increase efforts to ensure that their students become users of their public libraries.

9. Schools and communities should work together to increase student engagement with books.

10. School/higher education partnerships should be strengthened with increased collaboration to ensure that future middle, junior, and senior high school teachers are adept in the use of strategies that increase reading competencies for middle, junior, and senior high students.

11. Schools should make reading a priority, set goals, and create circumstances that will build a community of readers.

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Appendix A: MIDDLE, JUNIOR, AND SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL
READING QUESTIONNAIRE

1. The grade levels of the school are (check one box):

    ☐ 6-8 ☐ 7-8 ☐ 7-9 ☐ 7-12 ☐ 9-12 ☐ Other: _____to_____

2. The number of students in the school is _____.

3. The reading program of the school is best described as (check one box):

    ☐ Most of the students attend a reading class each day.
    The number of minutes of the reading classes each week is_____

    ☐ Most of the students attend an English or language arts class each week where
    literature is a part of the curriculum, but most students do not attend a reading class
    except for remedial help. The number of minutes of the English or language arts
    class each week is _____.

    ☐ Other (please describe):

    _____

    _____

    _____

4. The school's program for students, who need special help in reading, excluding special
education, is best described as (check one box):

    ☐ Chapter I help is available for students who need special help in reading

    ☐ Courses in reading are available for students who need special help in reading.

    ☐ No special help is available for students who need special help in reading.

    ☐ Other (please
    describe)_____
    _____
    _____

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5. The estimated number of students in the school who are more than two grade levels below their grade placement (excluding special education) who need special help in reading is _____.

6. The numbers of students in the school, excluding special education, who receive special help in reading_____. The type of special help is:

_____

_____

7. The materials and equipment for the school's reading program are best described as follows (check one box):

☐ The materials in reading classes are appropriate, current, and satisfactory at this time.

☐ The majority of the materials in the reading classes is not current and is in need of upgrading.

☐ Other (please describe).

_____

_____

_____

8. There are _____ students enrolled in at least one reading course this school year. (0480-06, 0480-07, 0480-08, 1120)

9. The total amount of funds expended during this school year for reading materials, excluding standard textbooks and library media center books is _____.

10. The total number of teachers who teach reading 0480-06, 0480-07, 0480-08, 1120 in this school is _____.

12. The total number of hours of staff development in reading, including college courses, conferences, etc., for the teachers listed in item 10 since June 1, 2002 is _____.

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12. The staff development for reading teachers in the school is best described as (check one box).

☐ The school has planned staff development program for reading teachers. (Please describe.)_____

_____

_____

☐ There is no planned staff development program for reading teachers, but teachers are active in the local and state reading council, are involved in other organizations where reading staff development is available, and/or attend college classes.

☐ There is no planned staff development program for reading teachers, and staff members do not participate in nonschool reading staff development programs.

13. If more staff development in reading were available, the teachers would probably prefer (please list):

_____

_____

_____

14. How many books are in the school library media center? _____.

15. How many books have been added to the school library media center since
 May 1, 2002? _____

16. The total amount of funds expended during this school year for library media center books is _____.

17. Does the school have a certified library media specialist? ☐ Yes   ☐ No

18. During the past week, how many books were checked out from the school library media center by students? _____

19. Please indicate what you feel is the percentage of students who read books from the school or a public library or other sources that are not connected with schoolwork.

☐ Less than 20%   ☐ 21-40%   ☐ 41-60%   ☐ 61-80%   ☐ Over 80%

If low interest is checked in item 19, please indicate what you feel is the main reason that many of the students are not engaged with books. (Check one box.)

☐ Students may not be interested in reading books because computers, VCR's, television, movies, and malls take up most of their recreational time.

☐ Most of the books in the library media center are not current and therefore not of interest to the students.

☐ A large proportion of students in this school have very poor reading skills.

☐ Other (please describe)._____

_____

_____

20. Does the school have one or more programs to encourage parents to read and discuss books with their children? ☐ Yes ☐ No   If yes, please describe:

_____

_____

_____

If yes, approximately what percentages of parents participate in such programs?

☐ Less than 10%   ☐ 10-25%   ☐ 26-45%   ☐ 45-60%   ☐ 61-75%   ☐ 76-90%

☐ Over 90%

21. How often do you feel that members of the school staff read and discuss books with each other?

☐ Frequently   ☐ Occasionally   ☐ Almost never

MIDDLE, JUNIOR, AND SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL READING QUESTIONNAIRE
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22. Is there a program in the school designed to encourage teachers to read?

☐ Yes   ☐ No

If yes, please describe.

_____

_____

_____

If yes, approximately how many teachers participate? _____

23. The percentage of students you feel regularly use the nearest public library.

☐ Less then 10 %   ☐ 11-30%   ☐ 31-50%   ☐ 51-70%   ☐ 71 -90%

☐ Over 90%

24. Are there programs sponsored within the community to help engage your students with books?   Yes ☐   No ☐   Don't know ☐

If yes, please describe

_____

_____

_____

25. What do you feel is the major influence on the direction of the reading program? (Check one box.)

☐ Indiana Department of Education

☐ International Reading Association

☐ College or University

☐ Within the school corporation

☐ The individual school

☐ Other (please describe) _____

_____

_____

26. Please provide what you feel is the rank of reading as a priority in the school as evidenced by the school's mission statement, budget allocations or a written plan (Check one box) ☐ High ☐ Average ☐ Low

27. Please describe or enclose material about any promising practices that are used in the school to promote reading.

_____

_____

_____

_____

Appendix B: Reading Course and Program Descriptions, Indiana Department of Education, August 1999.

Middle Level Reading

(Grades 7 and 8 or Grades 6, 7, and 8)

0480-06, 0480-07, 0480-08

Middle Level Reading instruction enables students to continue developing independent reading strategies and to adapt them to particular concepts, purposes for reading, and choices of information. Instruction focuses on opportunities for students to:

- Use word recognition skills.
- Build vocabulary through (1) direct instruction and the use of varied reference tools, (2) independent reading, (3) instructional-level reading, (4) listening to selections read aloud, and (5) guided reading instruction.
- Read and comprehend a variety of genres and materials and make connections to what is read.
- Select strategies appropriate to the purpose for reading and for the type of text.
- Determine the literal and inferential meaning of text, make predictions, and elaborate on meaning using prior knowledge.
- Apply knowledge of story structure to analyze and interpret selections.
- Use a variety of "real reading" materials and literacy activities to answer questions, to complete a task, and for enjoyment.
- Use research skills to answer questions, obtain information, and solve problems.

Students respond to reading activities in a variety of ways. They are given ample opportunity to select fiction, nonfiction, and other reading material from classroom libraries or school library media centers and to read independently for uninterrupted periods of time. Students are also read to regularly. Through the study of reading and literature, students continue to develop curiosity and a lifelong interest in a range of reading materials representing a variety of cultures, time periods, literary genre, and subject areas. In addition, students are given opportunities to share their reading through verbal, written, and dramatic activities, using a variety of technological media.

Middle Level Language Arts
(Grades 7 and 8 or Grades 6, 7, and 8)

0420-06, 0420-07, 0420-08

Middle Level Language Arts provides an integrated study of <u>oral communication</u>, the <u>writing</u> process, and language which includes <u>grammar</u>, <u>usage</u>, <u>mechanics</u>, and <u>spelling</u> as tools of effective communication. Instruction focuses on opportunities for students to:

- use the steps of the writing process which include:(1) prewriting, (2) drafting, (3) seeking feedback, (4) sharing, (5) revising, (6) editing, and (7) publishing;
- create visuals to organize and represent data;
- produce different types of written products across the various subject content areas showing evidence of research using technology tools and multimedia resources to support the writing;
- gather information and communicate with others using telecommunications;
- use language to explain, define, describe, compare, and evaluate;
- use a variety of verbal and nonverbal behaviors and adapt speech and language styles to fit the situation;
- listen and think critically to develop understanding and actively contribute to discussions; deliver practiced presentations using established guidelines.

Because the emphasis of the writing and language program is on learning to write through writing, students are given frequent opportunities and uninterrupted time for writing.

Oral communication instruction provides students with opportunities to continue to develop and use effective listening and speaking techniques and strategies in both formal and informal situations.

Developmental Reading

1120
Developmental Reading provides study and practice in the strategies necessary to increase reading comprehension. This course emphasizes strategies for adapting method and speed of reading to the type of material and purpose for reading. It also includes strategies for using reading to gather, retain, and analyze information. Students apply the strategies learned to a variety of types of reading material, ranging from newspapers and magazines to self-selected books. The course develops the students' appreciation of reading as a lifelong leisure activity. Presentations on and discussions of reading further internalize reading as a meaningful and social activity.
- This course does not meet English credit requirements for graduation.
- A one or two credit course.

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